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Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
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Implementation of the recommendations on the six mandated areas of the Permanent Forum and on the Millennium Development Goals

Report of the secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues on ongoing priorities and themes

Summary

The present report provides an overview of developments under the mandated areas of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues since its sixth session. This report also highlights the relevant information that has been gleaned from the contributions of the United Nations system and activities of the members of the Forum and its secretariat.

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I. Introduction

1. Since the holding of the sixth session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, a variety of issues and activities have been highlighted in regard to indigenous peoples by the intergovernmental system, Governments, indigenous peoples' organizations and civil society at large, and members of the Permanent Forum and its secretariat. In October 2007, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat invited written contributions regarding outstanding or follow-up matters arising from the sixth session and matters related to the preparations for the seventh session of the Permanent Forum.

2. As at 7 February 2008, written submissions had been received from 20 United Nations and other intergovernmental entities, namely, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat), the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Food Programme (WFP), the Asian Development Bank, the Council of Europe, the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat, the Inter-American Development Bank and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, the last mentioned having reported for the first time. The Governments of Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, the Russian Federation, Spain and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, also submitted reports.

Obstacles

3. A number of reports States and agencies, funds and programmes identified obstacles in the implementation of norms and policies on indigenous peoples' issues.[1] They included: lack of human and financial resources for the implementation of programmes; weak political will; and changes in government institutions. It was also pointed out that, as the implementation of the Permanent Forum's recommendations had required more than one year, reports to the Forum could not reflect all the progress at once.

4. ILO pointed out that improving the interactive dialogue between United Nations organizations and the members of the Permanent Forum before, during and after the annual sessions of the Forum would serve to ensure that the recommendations of the Forum better reflected the substantive contributions of those organizations, and that such recommendations were technically accurate and within the mandate of agencies, so as to ensure that they were given due respect and

[1] Some obstacles and facilitating factors had been identified in previous years as well and were summarized in the secretariat's reports.

effectively acted upon. ILO made a number of suggestions in that regard (see E/C.19/2008/4/Add.5).

Facilitating factors

5. Facilitating factors identified included: national laws and policies on indigenous issues; key governmental and civil society partners and indigenous networks; and positive political conditions in many countries, especially South America, that had provided important opportunities for advancing the agenda.

II. Developments under the mandated areas and special themes of the Permanent Forum, including the Millennium Development Goals

A. Economic and social development

6. The Government of the Russian Federation, the Governor of Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region, the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation and the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East (RAIPON) held the International Workshop on Perspectives of Relationships between Indigenous Peoples and Industrial Companies in Salekhard, Yamal-Nenets Autonomous Region, Russian Federation, on 2 and 3 July 2007. This international meeting was attended by 13 members of the Permanent Forum and seven indigenous experts from the Forum's seven sociocultural regions, as well as representatives of the government of Yamal Nenets, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. The Workshop concluded that, despite some modest progress made in terms of awareness among States and industrial companies of the complex and serious problems faced by indigenous peoples as a result of their interface with these companies, there was still a long way to go with respect to strengthening primary responsibility and accountability of States as well as establishing corporate social responsibility (see E/C.19/2008/5/Add.6).

Development account

7. The Development Account project entitled "Engaging indigenous women: local government capacity-building through new technologies in Latin America" is in its implementation stage. Assessments and preparatory work were completed in January 2008, and the first workshops were scheduled to be held in February 2008. These workshops will bring together indigenous women from across the three participating countries (Bolivia, Ecuador and Peru) in addition to other relevant actors from government and international organizations. Building on the results of the workshops, the participating indigenous organizations will begin the production of relevant materials for indigenous women in the three countries. It is expected that the production of materials will take place throughout 2008.

Review of country reports on the Millennium Development Goals

8. In response to a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its fifth session,[2] the Forum secretariat undertook its third desk review of country reports on the Millennium Development Goals to analyse how they had addressed indigenous issues. The desk review underscores the importance of the recommendations of the Forum at its 2005 and 2006 sessions where it undertook a specific examination of Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples and highlighted elements for their greater inclusion.[3] A total of 10 national reports were reviewed in 2007 from a broad range of countries in which there are indigenous peoples.[4] The country reports were examined in order to identify elements of inclusion of indigenous issues, general trends and progress achieved, as well as opportunities and challenges for further integrating elements for inclusion of indigenous issues into the Millennium Development Goal process. There was scant explicit reference made in the reports to indigenous peoples. The current review has built upon the conclusions of previous reviews.[5]

9. Conclusions and recommendations of the review included the following:

(a) Twenty per cent of the Millennium Development Goal reports reviewed sufficiently included indigenous peoples by consistently reporting on their situation (Nepal and Viet Nam) and another 50 per cent addressed indigenous issues to varying degrees (Guyana, Myanmar, the Russian Federation, Suriname and Thailand), while the remaining 30 per cent did not include any mention of indigenous peoples (Kenya, South Africa and Zimbabwe); and none of the country reports under review indicated that they had been prepared in consultation with indigenous peoples' organizations;

(b) None of the Millennium Development Goal reports provided disaggregated data for indigenous peoples in a consistent manner, for every goal. **Guided by the recommendations of the Forum at its fourth and fifth sessions (see note 3 above), the current review reiterates that improved disaggregation of data on indigenous peoples is necessary to effectively monitor progress towards Millennium Development Goal achievement, and that this should be a key priority for Governments and the United Nations system;**

(c) The two most positive examples of reporting on indigenous peoples (Nepal and Viet Nam) consistently included data on indigenous peoples in the

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[2] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2006, Supplement No. 23* (E/2006/43), sect. B, para. 152.

[3] At its fourth session, in 2005, the Forum addressed Millennium Development Goals 1 and 2 within the context of indigenous peoples' issues (see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 23* (E/2005/43), chap. I, sect. B, paras. 4-57). The fifth session of the Forum was devoted to the special theme "The Millennium Development Goals and indigenous peoples: redefining the goals" (ibid., *2006, Supplement No. 23* (E/2006/43), chap. I, sect. B, paras. 4-43).

[4] The reports reviewed are the latest available for each of the following countries, ranging in date of publication from 2004 to 2007: Guyana (2007), Kenya (2005), Myanmar (2005), Nepal (2005), Russian Federation (2005), South Africa (2005), Suriname (2005), Thailand (2004), Viet Nam (2005), and Zimbabwe (2004). The reports are available on the United Nations Development Group website at www.undg.org.

[5] Two previous desk reviews are available through the Forum's website, at http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/mdgs.html.

context of the Millennium Development Goals and recognized that certain groups, including indigenous peoples, are the most disadvantaged and marginalized in the country; at times, they made mention of specific mechanisms or policies that targeted these communities. Other reports (such as that of the Russian Federation) included examples of best practices or referred to social challenges faced by indigenous peoples, but the reporting was not consistent across the Millennium Development Goals;

(d) While most of the reports included at least some mention of disproportionate development, they were more likely to describe the situation by providing data and examples in the context of provincial, regional, or rural/urban disparities. **In these descriptions of disproportionate development, the reports often failed to explicitly acknowledge when the regions or areas that were disproportionately affected, corresponded to the areas where indigenous peoples lived. Such omissions are problematic and do not conduce to the provision of a clear picture of the situation of indigenous peoples;**

(e) When the reports did mention indigenous peoples, they did so most often in the context of poverty, education and mortality rates (Millennium Development Goals 1, 2, 4 and 6). They usually mentioned that indigenous peoples lived in remote areas that lacked access to the same services available to other groups, and were thus disadvantaged or were considered vulnerable groups. In the reports where the data allowed for some analysis in respect of indigenous peoples and mortality rates (Guyana, Myanmar, Nepal, the Russian Federation, Thailand and Viet Nam), mortality rates for indigenous peoples were exhibited to be significantly higher than the national averages;

(f) The situation of indigenous women (in the context of Millennium Development Goals 3 and 5) was rarely mentioned. The only report that made more than a passing reference to indigenous peoples in the context of those Goals was that of Viet Nam, which discussed the social challenges in respect of achieving gender parity for indigenous women;

(g) Several of the reports (Guyana, Nepal and the Russian Federation) included at least some mention of indigenous peoples in the context of environmental stability (Millennium Development Goal 7). The report by Nepal, in particular, highlighted the positive role of indigenous peoples in respect of environmental sustainability, provided an example of their role in land-use management, and recommended future action to secure access and benefit-sharing with respect to genetic resources. None of the reports mentioned indigenous peoples in the context of establishing a global partnership for development (Millennium Development Goal 8);

(h) **In future reporting, countries should undertake to include indigenous peoples in the context of meeting each and every Goal. Guided by the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (General Assembly resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007, annex), it is recommended that the free, prior and informed consent of indigenous peoples should be sought in all development initiatives that focus upon improving their lives, and countries should comment on this matter clearly in their Millennium Development Goal reports;**

(i) **Finally, the current review reiterates the previous recommendation of similar reviews, as follows: Governments should (i) include indigenous peoples in the context of the overall report, including its planning; (ii) include indigenous peoples in the context of meeting each specific Goal; (iii) include indigenous peoples' effective participation in the planning process of future interventions, as well as in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of programmes and projects that will directly or indirectly affect them; and (iv) improve the collection and disaggregation of data regarding indigenous peoples.** Other important developments in this area are reported in section H below.

B. Environment

Environment and traditional knowledge

10. The Permanent Forum's theme for the seventh session is "Climate change, bio-cultural diversity and livelihoods: the stewardship role of indigenous peoples and new challenges". Climate change is considered to be a critical global challenge and recent events have demonstrated the world's growing vulnerability to climate change. For indigenous peoples, climate change is already a reality and poses threats and dangers to the survival of their communities. Climate change is also a major focus for the United Nations including the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. Climate change is not just an environmental issue. It also has serious economic and social implications. Climate change is, fundamentally, a sustainable development challenge, that should be linked more firmly to the broader development agenda, including to poverty reduction and other internationally agreed development goals.

11. There are a number of United Nations organizations dealing with the issue of indigenous peoples and climate change. The annual meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (IASG), held in Montreal, Canada, in September 2007 and hosted by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, focused on the theme "Climate change and indigenous peoples". The members of the Support Group prepared a collated paper on indigenous peoples and climate change (E/C.19/2008/CRP.2) for the Permanent Forum's seventh session.

12. At the 60th Annual DPI/NGO Conference, entitled "Climate Change: How It Impacts Us All", held at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 7 September 2007, Vicki Tauli-Corpuz and Wilton Littlechild, Permanent Forum members, made statements at a morning round table on indigenous peoples, culture and traditional knowledge. They pointed out that indigenous peoples were facing many challenges in respect of climate change such as the impact of monocropping plantations, mass migration, and the effects on water quality, food security, human health and infrastructure. Mr. Littlechild made a plea to the international community to take into account indigenous peoples' role and their traditional knowledge in future capacity-building and adaptation programmes. Indigenous peoples from the Pacific, Africa, the Russian Federation and Latin America gave powerful presentations (DPI/2466).

13. During the United Nations Climate Change Conference, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 14 December 2007, Ms. Tauli-Corpuz made statements at various events. The main statement was made during the launch of the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility, at which Ms. Tauli-Corpuz pointed out that

tropical and subtropical forests, which constitute the focus of the Facility, are home to approximately 160 million indigenous peoples who remain in very vulnerable situations because most States still do not recognize indigenous peoples' rights to those forests and the resources found therein. She also stated that, while the Facility could represent a positive undertaking, indigenous peoples were very apprehensive because of their negative experiences with similar initiatives.

14. Environmental damage such as pollution and toxic dumping on indigenous peoples' lands was the theme of an international expert workshop entitled "Indigenous peoples and protection of the environment", held in Khabarovsk, the Russian Federation, from 27 to 29 August 2007.[6] Permanent Forum member Pavel Sulyandziga served as Chair of the meeting and Forum member Michael Dodson as Rapporteur.

15. The international regime on access and benefit-sharing continues to be an important area of development for the Permanent Forum. At the 5th meeting of the Ad Hoc Open-ended Working Group on Access and Benefit Sharing of the Convention on Biological Diversity, held in Montreal, Canada, from 8 to 12 October 2007, further discussions were undertaken on how an international regime on access and benefit-sharing could set the rules on how benefits from the utilization of genetic resources and associated traditional knowledge might be fairly and equitably shared between the provider countries and indigenous and local communities which are the holders of the knowledge, as well as companies and research institutions. Directly relevant to the discussions on issues pertaining to genetic resources and traditional knowledge is article 31 of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which is expected to provide a basis for the negotiations on an access and benefit-sharing regime.

16. Three other important reports, two prepared for the sixth session of the Permanent Forum, will be considered under items of the agenda for the seventh session:

(a) The paper entitled "Oil palm and other commercial tree plantations, monocropping: impacts on indigenous peoples' land tenure and resource management systems and livelihoods" (E/C.19/2007/CRP.6), prepared by the Special Rapporteurs on the subject, Victoria Tauli-Corpuz and Parshuram Tamang. At the sixth session of the Forum, it was recommended that further analysis be undertaken on this important issue;

(b) The concept paper on indigenous traditional knowledge (E/C.19/2007/10), and prepared by the Special Rapporteur on the subject, Michael Dodson. The Permanent Forum recommended that the paper be widely circulated and that there be a call for written submission on how indigenous traditional knowledge could be protected at the international level by utilizing customary law. Mr. Dodson, as Special Rapporteur, was requested to present a follow-up study on indigenous traditional knowledge (see E/2007/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 145);

(c) The theme of the meeting of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues held in Montreal, Canada, from 17 to 19 September 2007, was "climate change and indigenous peoples". A number of recommendations are contained in the report of the meeting (E/C.19/2008/6). In addition, the Support

[6] The report is available at www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.

Group has prepared a special inter-agency collated paper on indigenous peoples and climate change (E/C.19/2008/CRP.2).

17. There are two other meetings on climate change that include the Forum secretariat and Forum members:

(a) The conference on indigenous peoples and climate change organized by the International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, Copenhagen, 21 and 22 February 2008;

(b) The joint United Nations University (UNU) Institute of Advanced Studies, Forum secretariat and North Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance International Expert Group Meeting on Indigenous Peoples and Climate Change, to be held in Darwin, Australia, from 2 to 4 April 2008.

18. **The attention of the Permanent Forum is drawn to the recommendations of the Inter-Agency Support Group on collated paper on indigenous peoples and climate change. It is also suggested that the Permanent Forum might wish to adopt the following recommendation:**

That regional contingency plans be developed to accommodate environmental refugees in a manner that maintains their national and indigenous identity and cultural integrity.

C. Education

19. Overall, access to education still remains a major issue for indigenous people throughout the world. There are some good examples of indigenous children's access to education which were reported to the Permanent Forum by organizations, including UNICEF. Organizations like UNFPA, in partnership with IFAD, continues to promote the education of indigenous girls, negotiating with teachers and the local school system their right not only to attend school, but also to be able to wear their own traditional dress.

20. At its sixth session, the Permanent Forum recommended that a comparative case study be undertaken on the role of boarding schools for indigenous children, which has attracted considerable international attention (E/2007/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 70). The Forum acknowledged that in some countries, boarding schools has had a very negative, even tragic, impact on the families, cultures and identities of indigenous peoples but that in other regions of the world, attending boarding schools was considered an important step for the successful social integration and education of indigenous children. Hence, the situation is complex. The Forum secretariat is preparing a background paper on this subject, to be made available at the Forum's seventh session.

D. Health

21. Like indigenous peoples' access to education, their access to health services remains a critical issue in both the developing and the developed world. The World Health Organization (WHO) is mandated to devote special attention to the issue of indigenous peoples' health. The Permanent Forum secretariat worked together with WHO to produce a fact sheet on indigenous peoples' health. The fact sheet is now

available in English, French and Spanish on both the WHO and Forum websites. There is a further possibility that a closer relationship will develop between the Forum and WHO as well as other United Nations organizations in order to implement the workplans of WHO that address the critical area of indigenous peoples' health. In their reports, organizations provided information regarding their work in indigenous communities on reproductive health, prevention of sexual violence and steps taken towards recognizing the importance of indigenous healers (see E/C.19/2008/4/Add.1 and Add.6).

E. Culture

22. The General Assembly, in its resolution 61/266 of 16 May 2007, proclaimed the year 2008 International Year of Languages. Responding to the need for concrete public policies for the protection and promotion of indigenous languages, the Permanent Forum, at its sixth session, recommended to the Economic and Social Council the holding of an international expert group meeting on indigenous languages (E/2007/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 72). Pursuant to the recommendation of the Forum, the Council, by its decision 2007/244 of 25 July 2007, decided to authorize such a meeting. The expert group meeting, which was held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 10 January 2008, was attended by the following Forum members: Victoria Tauli-Corpuz, Hassan Id Balkassm, Carlos Mamani Condori, Paimaneh Hasteh and Tonya Gonella Frichner, as well as seven indigenous experts, and observers for United Nations organizations, States, non-governmental organizations and indigenous peoples' organizations. The meeting adopted significant recommendations brought to the attention of the Forum in the report of the meeting (E/C.19/2008/3).

F. Human rights

23. The most important development in the field of indigenous peoples' rights following the sixth session of the Permanent Forum was the historic adoption by the General Assembly, in its resolution 61/295 of 13 September 2007, of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.[7] Various Forum members engaged actively in advocacy for the adoption of the Declaration, following the Forum's recommendations in that regard. Statements on the adoption of the Declaration by the Chairperson of the Forum, the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other high-level officials in the United Nations system may be accessed at the website of the Forum secretariat (www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii).

24. Article 42 of the Declaration specifically mentions the Permanent Forum, as follows:

> The United Nations, its bodies, including the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, and specialized agencies, including at the country level, and States

[7] General Assembly resolution 61/295 was adopted by a recorded vote of 143 to 4, with 11 abstentions.

shall promote respect for and full application of the provisions of this Declaration and follow up the effectiveness of this Declaration.

At its sixth session, the Permanent Forum mandated a study, to be conducted by Ida Nicolaisen and Wilton Littlechild, on the structures, procedures and mechanisms that currently exist and that might be established to effectively address the human rights situation of indigenous peoples and to arrange for indigenous representation and inclusion in such structures, procedures and mechanisms (see E/2007/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 150). The study (E/C.19/2008/2), inter alia, makes recommendations on how the Forum may approach its new role under the Declaration. The Forum is expected to discuss this issue at its seventh session.

25. Three members of the Permanent Forum, Hassan Id Bakassm, Wilton Littlechild and Ida Nicolaisen, participated at the informal consultation on the new mechanism on indigenous peoples' rights at the Human Rights Council held in Geneva in December 2007. By Council resolution 6/36 of 14 December 2007, the Council determined that the Expert Mechanism on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples would replace the Working Group on Indigenous Populations. The mandate of the Expert Mechanism is to provide the Council with thematic expertise on the rights of indigenous peoples in the manner and form requested by the Council, to assist the Council in the implementation of its mandate.[8]

26. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues in the Latin American and Caribbean Region held a meeting with the Indigenous Consultative Group for the region in Quito on 5 and 6 November 2007, to discuss, inter alia, the dissemination of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the region. The report of the meeting, which was convened by UNICEF in cooperation with the Forum secretariat and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, is posted on the Forum website (www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii).

27. The principle of free, prior and informed consent was addressed in the reports of Colombia, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and ILO, providing information on laws adopted and activities carried out that follow this important principle. It is also a major principle for policies and programmes on adaptation and mitigation efforts connected with climate change, including the new programme aimed at reducing emissions from deforestation and degradation (REDD).

28. In response to a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its sixth session (E/2006/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 34), the Inter-Agency Support Group will hold a special meeting on the Declaration in February 2008 in Geneva, to discuss means of inter-agency follow-up and support for the implementation of the Declaration.

29. Despite positive institutional developments in the human rights area, allegations of violations of human rights of indigenous peoples and individuals continued to be received by the Forum secretariat. However, a novel and welcome approach has been introduced in the context of efforts to mainstream indigenous issues. At the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, and for the first time, no fewer than 11 resolutions and 2 decisions were adopted that included references

[8] See the draft report of the Council on its resumed sixth session, held from 10 to 14 December 2007 (A/HRC/6/L.11/Add.1), chap. I, sect. A.

to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, or to indigenous peoples, or to both.

G. Awareness-raising, information and production of material and events

30. The Permanent Forum secretariat organized or co-organized more than 15 events including multi-stakeholder events in 2007. In addition, during the Forum's sixth session, the Forum secretariat coordinated more than 60 side events, organized by indigenous peoples organizations, non-governmental organizations and United Nations organizations.

31. At the commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People at United Nations Headquarters on 9 August 2007, a panel discussion was organized entitled "Honouring indigenous youth and languages", as well as a cultural event. Messages for the Day were issued by the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, the Coordinator of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, and the Chairperson of the Forum, among others.

32. As part of the promotion of the presence and visibility of indigenous peoples during the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly, the Permanent Forum secretariat in cooperation with the Department of Public Information of the United Nations Secretariat organized the following:

(a) A press conference on "The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples: where do we stand?", to discuss the latest developments regarding the United Nations Declaration, including the facilitator's report to the President of the General Assembly;

(b) A media strategy which included press interviews with indigenous leaders and members of the Permanent Forum; media advisories were sent to United Nations information centres and outside media;

(c) Appearance of indigenous leaders and representatives of Member States at the media stakeout in the General Assembly Hall, after the adoption of the Declaration on 13 September 2007.

33. Major international wire services including several national wire services covered the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, among them Reuters, Associated Press (AP), Agence France-Presse (AFP), Kyodo, Australian Associated Press (AAP), Canadian Press, BBC News, *The New York Times*, *Sydney Morning Herald*, and *The Australian*, as well as the national broadcaster ABC, among others. Several interviews were conducted by Spanish media such as CNN en Español and EFE, as well as Saami Radio.

34. Government officials were quoted in articles including the Foreign Minister of Bolivia, David Choquehuanca, who spoke at the media stakeout; the Ambassador of New Zealand; and officials from the Permanent Missions of Benin, Japan and the United States of America to the United Nations.

Materials produced

35. The Permanent Forum secretariat produces four internal newsletters annually which are addressed to Forum members and four public newsletters in English. Translation of the newsletter into other languages is necessary in order to reach diverse audiences, but resource constraints have not yet made this possible. The newsletter highlights the activities of the Forum, its secretariat and some news from field offices. The public newsletter is available online.[9]

36. The Permanent Forum secretariat has released various information and specialist materials and publications which can also be found on its website.[10] Some of the recent publications include:

(a) Brochure on the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People: This brochure contains information on the goal and objectives of the Second Decade as well as information on the Trust Fund for the Second Decade. The brochure is produced in English and Spanish and will be available in other United Nations languages at the end of 2008;

(b) New brochure on the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues: This brochure contains general information about the Permanent Forum's mandate, and the history of indigenous peoples at the United Nations, among other important information, and is available in English, Spanish, French and Russian;

(c) "Handbook for Participants", those who attend the *sessions of the Permanent Forum*: This is a useful guide, especially for those who wish to attend the Forum sessions. It contains practical information on the Forum and on activities centring around the session such as the process for accreditation, the various indigenous peoples' caucuses, the speakers list, writing statements and logistic information. The Handbook is available in English, French, Russian and Spanish;

(d) "Good Practices on Indigenous Peoples' Development": This compilation of good practices is the result of detailed case studies commissioned by the secretariat of the Permanent Forum in cooperation with Tebtebba Foundation, an indigenous peoples' non-governmental organization based in the Philippines. The case studies are those of International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) fieldwork in Latin America and Asia, where indigenous peoples were project beneficiaries as well as project reviewers and evaluators;

(e) "Desk Reviews of select Millennium Development Goal Reports as per Indigenous Issues": No. 1 (2006); No. 2 (2007); and No. 3 (2008): These desk reviews provide an analysis of the extent to which indigenous peoples' issues are included and addressed within the context of the Millennium Development Goal reports produced by States that have indigenous populations;

(f) "Integration of Indigenous Peoples' Perspectives in Country Development Processes": These annual desk reviews, with the subtitle "Review of Selected Common Country Assessments (CCAs) and United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks (UNDAFs) in Various Countries" (Nos. 1 (2006), 2 (2007) and 3 (2008)), are part of the effort to promote the implementation of the Permanent Forum's recommendations, with a view to identifying challenges faced by

[9] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/newsletter.html.

[10] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html.

indigenous peoples at country level. It is also aimed at strengthening the United Nations system through better consideration of indigenous issues in United Nations analytical and programmatic instruments, particularly at country level;

(g) "Desk Review of Select Resident Coordinator Reports: 2001-2003": This analysis explores the link between Common Country Assessment/United Nations Development Assistance Framework (CCA/UNDAF) and resident coordinator reports and to what extent indigenous issues are covered. This review is part of Permanent Forum secretariat efforts to inform the Permanent Forum, indigenous peoples, States and the United Nations system, including the United Nations Development Group, on progress made towards the integration of indigenous peoples' issues in the United Nations development work at the field level;

(h) "A Resource Kit on Indigenous Peoples' Issues": addressed mainly to United Nations country teams, this will be available within the first half of 2008.

37. The Permanent Forum secretariat website is maintained in English, French, Russian and Spanish. It continues to be an important information and communication tool on the Forum and other United Nations-related activities. The website continues to grow every year, although the translation and updating of contents in official languages remain a challenge. One of the highlights of the website is the Permanent Forum's recommendations database, which is open to the public and allows the user to easily follow the progress of implementation of all Forum recommendations. In addition, the website contains important pages on the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the new members of the Forum for the period 2008-2010, Forum Special Rapporteurs, the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People and information regarding sources of funding for indigenous peoples, among others.

38. The Permanent Forum secretariat has responded to a recommendation made by the Forum at its first session for the production of a publication on the state of the world's indigenous people (see *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2002, Supplement No. 23* (E/2002/43/Rev.1 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. B, para. 8). Seven indigenous experts, one from each of the seven sociocultural regions, are contributing chapters to the publication. The chapters focus on those areas that the Forum is mandated to discuss. The publication is intended to be an awareness-raising tool which provides a general overview of some of the issues that are most relevant to indigenous peoples. *The State of the World's Indigenous Peoples* is due to be published in late 2008.

H. Promotion of integration and coordination of indigenous issues

39. Considerable and increased inter-agency work on indigenous peoples is conducted through the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues (IASG), the United Nations Development Group and the Inter-Agency Network on Gender and Women's Equality. In addition, the Intra-Departmental Task Force on Indigenous Issues of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs has continued to bring together relevant Divisions of the Department to discuss common actions in regard to indigenous issues. The Department's Division for Public Administration and Development Management, in cooperation with the Forum secretariat, is promoting an interdivisional project on issues related to institutional capacity of local governments led by indigenous authorities.

40. According to organizations, collection and disaggregation of data continue to be a challenge in terms of addressing the situation of indigenous peoples, whose realities are often hidden beneath national averages. Some positive development have been reported, however, by UNFPA in this area, including work undertaken in cooperation with the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) in the preparation of the 2010 censuses. Similarly, the outline by the United Nations Statistics Division of its efforts in respect of the preparation of the next censuses could give rise to some optimism that indigenous peoples and their realities may be better reflected in the outcomes of 2010.

Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues

41. The Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues has continued to support the Permanent Forum since the sixth session. The Support Group has prepared a paper on indigenous peoples and climate change as an input for the seventh session and has played a key role in disseminating the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples throughout the United Nations system. The Group continues to grow and now includes 31 intergovernmental entities, including several United Nations organizations and international financial institutions.

42. As noted above, the annual meeting of the Support Group for 2007 was convened and hosted by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal, Canada, from 17 to 19 September 2007. The meeting, which was attended by representatives from 15 United Nations organizations, multilateral organizations and international financial institutions, as well as 3 members of the Forum (Mr. Id Bakassm, Mr. Littlechild and Ms. Tauli-Corpuz), had "Climate change and indigenous peoples" as its main theme. In addition to the theme, the Support Group discussed the following items: adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples by the General Assembly, follow-up of the 2006 Support Group meeting, the United Nations Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues, coordination of work on indicators of development and well-being, reflection on the sixth session of the Permanent Forum, working methods, and a revision of the Support Group's terms of reference.

43. The meeting of the Support Group provided an excellent opportunity for organizations to share experiences on their work on indigenous issues and plan joint work for the coming year, particularly in light of the adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. As noted above, the Support Group decided to prepare a common paper on climate change for the seventh session of the Forum.

United Nations Development Group

44. Since November 2006, the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples' Issues has been functioning as a task team of the United Nations Development Group under a specific mandate. Over the course of 2007, the United Nations Development Group Task Team on Indigenous Issues drafted the United Nations Development Group Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues through a concerted team effort. The Guidelines are designed to assist United Nations country teams in integrating and mainstreaming indigenous peoples' issues in United Nations operational activities at country level. The Guidelines entered into force in

February 2008 and constitute a significant development. The Task Team is in the process of producing a plan of action for rolling out the guidelines over the next five years.

I. Indigenous children and youth

45. Organizations such as UNFPA and UNICEF provided information in their reports to the Permanent Forum on their work with indigenous youth and children (E/C.19/2008/4/Add.6 and Add.1, respectively). UNFPA is especially active in promoting education in sexual and reproductive health among indigenous youth and children. UNICEF carries out its work under the Convention on the Rights of the Child[11] and promotes early childhood development programmes. Further information can be found in their reports to the Permanent Forum. The reports did not, however, provide enough information on their work in some of the Forum sociocultural regions, such as the Pacific, North America, the Arctic and Central and Eastern Europe, the Russian Federation, Central Asia and Transcaucasia.

46. The secretariat of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues continues to collaborate with the United Nations Youth Programme. During 2007, Forum secretariat contributed a chapter on the Forum for a publication that the United Nations Youth Programme is preparing in order to strengthen youth participation at United Nations meetings. The Forum secretariat also assisted the United Nations Youth Programme in the design of their web page on indigenous youth.

47. *World Youth Report, 2007*,[12] produced by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and released in December 2007, provides important information on youth in Latin America, Asia and Africa and small island developing States. While the report gives an overall perspective of youth issues, it also provides an indication of what the situation might be for indigenous youth. For example, the East Asia and Pacific regions contribute the largest group of students studying abroad. In regard to employment and income levels in Latin America, youth are worse off today than they were 15 years ago. Also, in developing countries, the group of young people aged 15-19 have the second highest proportion of people living in poverty, after children under age 14 (the poorest segment of society). Finally, youth unemployment continues to be high in most small island developing States, with 1 in every 5 youths unemployed in the Caribbean.[13] This brief amount of information provides a rather disturbing view of the situation of youth and children and there is much work to be undertaken to obtain further information on the situation of indigenous youth and children.

J. Indigenous women

48. In 2007, a publication entitled *Indigenous Women and the United Nations System*[14] was completed. It includes a compilation of 18 case studies, which were submitted by the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, FAO, IFAD,

[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1577, No. 27531.

[12] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.07.IV.1.

[13] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unyin/documents/wyr07_fact_sheet_english.pdf.

[14] United Nations publication, Sales No. E.06.I.9.

ILO, UNFPA, UNIFEM and UNDP regarding their work with indigenous women in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The publication was launched during the Permanent Forum's sixth session in May 2007. This collection of case studies will be disseminated widely so that it can serve as a practical tool for future work within the United Nations system and other organizations engaging with indigenous peoples. Language versions of the publication will be available for the Permanent Forum's seventh session; the English and Spanish versions are available on the Forum secretariat website.[15]

49. A series of "Briefing Notes on Indigenous Peoples" was launched during the Permanent Forum's sixth session in 2007 on: Gender and Indigenous Peoples (No. 1); Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Economic and Social Development (No. 2); Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Education (No. 3); Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Culture (No. 4); Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Environment (No. 5); and Gender and Indigenous Peoples' Human Rights (No. 6). The material was prepared by the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Forum secretariat. The briefing notes (in English) are available on the Forum website.[16]

Tenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean

50. On 8 August 2007, a side event entitled "Citizenship and rights of indigenous women and Afro descendants" was jointly organized by UNDP, UNIFEM, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (INSTRAW) and the Forum secretariat. Speakers included Otilia Lux de Coti, Forum member; Margarita Antonio, a Miskitu from Nicaragua; and Maria Ines Barbosa, an Afro descendant from Brazil. The side event was moderated by the Forum secretariat. The Regional Conference on Women, which focused on the contribution of women to the economy and social protection, particularly through unpaid work, and on political participation and gender parity, was held from 6 to 9 August 2007 in Quito.

51. During the side event, participants called for implementation of the recommendations of the Forum, resolution 49/7 on indigenous women, adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women[17] at its forty-ninth session on 11 March 2005 and the Declaration of Indigenous Women. References to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the recommendations of the Forum appeared in the Quito Consensus, which is the Governments' final document at the tenth session of the Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean, Quito, 6-9 August 2007.[18]

Gender and statistics

52. The staff of the Forum secretariat attended the Eighth International Meeting on Gender Statistics, held from 5 to 7 September 2007 in Aguascalientes, Mexico. The meeting was organized by UNIFEM, ECLAC, the National Institute of Women of

[15] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/publications/Indigenous/indwomen07.htm.

[16] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/publications.html.

[17] See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 7* (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I, sect. D.

[18] http://www.eclac.cl/publicaciones/xml/5/29555/dsc1i.pdf.

Mexico (Inmujeres), and the National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Computer Sciences of Mexico (INEGI). The Forum secretariat participated in the panel on gender statistics for indigenous population. The panel presented the international framework on indigenous peoples' rights designed to promote indigenous peoples' (especially women's) full participation in the upcoming 2010 round of censuses, pursuant to a recommendation of the Permanent Forum at its sixth session (E/2007/43, chap. I, sect. B, para. 127 (d)).

III. Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues

53. General Assembly resolutions 57/191 of 18 December 2002 and 59/174 of 20 December 2004 had both referred to the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues, which supports the Forum and projects and programmes undertaken during the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People.

54. In 2007, for the funding of general activities related to the Forum, the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues received contributions from Algeria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Cyprus, Estonia, Japan, Mexico, Norway and UNICEF. The total amount received was $158,281. Also, during 2007, the Fund supported travel costs related to participation of 18 Forum members in meetings that were of relevance to the Forum's mandate. These missions provided the opportunity for members to raise awareness and promote integration and coordination of activities relating to indigenous issues.

55. The Fund also supported the provision of translation services during the sixth session of the Forum for in-session documents and the provision of technical services related to special events held in conjunction with the session. In addition, the Fund supported the travel of Rebang Dewan, the child who had won the International Competition on the Permanent Forum's Visual Identifier and was recognized at the opening of the session. The Fund also supported cultural events in connection with the commemoration of the International Day of the World's Indigenous People on 9 August.

56. In 2006, IFAD provided a grant for the Permanent Forum's programme on indigenous peoples and indicators of poverty and well-being. Three regional consultations with indigenous experts were held in Africa, Asia and Latin America. The purpose of these consultations was to capture indicators of indigenous peoples' poverty and well-being and to present a synthesis of the results to the Permanent Forum at its sixth session. Following these consultations, a synthesis paper (E/C.19/2008/9) was prepared, which will be submitted to the Permanent Forum at its seventh session.

57. The Forum secretariat fellowship programme, requested by the Forum, has not yet materialized owing to insufficient funds. Finland has agreed that the funds previously earmarked for fellowships would be devoted to capacity-building activities at field level.

58. With a view to assisting the United Nations country teams in the implementation of the Guidelines, the secretariat of the Permanent Forum, in cooperation with ILO; the secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity; UNDP, in particular the UNDP Regional Indigenous Peoples' Programme in Asia; UNICEF; and members of the Inter-Agency Support Group on Indigenous Peoples'

Issues, prepared a "Resource Kit on Partnership with Indigenous Peoples: Supporting Indigenous Issues at Country Level". In 2007, UNICEF provided funds to the Trust Fund to cover the editing costs of the Resource Kit.

59. In connection with the Second International Decade, in 2007, the Trust Fund on Indigenous Issues received contributions from Algeria, Chile, Cyprus, Ecuador, Estonia, Japan, Peru, Luxembourg and Mexico for funding programmes and projects under the Second Decade. The total amount received was $103,922. The Bureau of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, acting as the advisory group, held a meeting in May 2007 to review all the project proposals received. At that meeting, 20 projects were approved by the advisory group and endorsed by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, acting as the Coordinator of the Second International Decade.

IV. Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People

60. The adoption of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which was an unfulfilled target of the first Decade, is now a major achievement to be hailed under the Second Decade.

61. A significant development has also taken place recently in respect of bringing United Nations norms and policies related to indigenous peoples closer to the field level. Within the framework of the Second Decade, and following the initiative of the Coordinator of the Second Decade in 2006, the United Nations Development Group (UNDG) adopted, on 1 February 2008, the "Guidelines on Indigenous Peoples' Issues" for United Nations country teams.[19] The Guidelines will be widely disseminated to United Nations country teams and practical measures will follow on the part of the United Nations system (see above).

62. In their reports to the Permanent Forum, most organizations and States pointed out, in general that, although they had not undertaken specific activities under the Decade's framework, their overall work followed the spirit of the goal and objectives of the Programme of Action for the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People (see A/60/270, sect. II). Specific analysis is provided by ILO of each of the Decade's five objectives and how the current work and future plans of ILO fit under those objectives (see E/C.19/2008/4/Add.5, sect. IX, paras. 53-61). ILO also reported on a workshop on the Decade in the African region organized with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in Brazzaville in November 2007. IFAD reported that it had supported a meeting in Asia on the evaluation of the First Decade.

63. An analysis of the responses received also indicates that the challenges that various actors faced in terms of implementation were bound up with the limited human and financial resources. This is understandable, as the governmental and intergovernmental sectors, indigenous organizations and other parts of civil society have been invited to address the policy recommendations emanating from (a) the Permanent Forum, (b) the General Assembly as far as the Second International Decade is concerned, (c) the Special Rapporteurs, (d) human rights treaty bodies

[19] See www.undg.org and www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii.

and (e) the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. It is important to consider, however, that many of these recommendations and the objectives of the Second International Decade are complementary and are not necessarily about providing more resources, but rather about changing the way of delivering programmes, especially in terms of promoting non-discrimination and inclusion, the full and effective participation of indigenous peoples, and development programmes that are culturally appropriate, as well as establishing strong monitoring mechanisms.[20]

[20] Objectives (i), (ii), (iii) and (v) of the Decade.